

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11-13, 15-17 and 19-21 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 4, 9, 12, 17, 20 and 21 were amended and Claims 6 and 14 were cancelled by the present amendment. Support for amendments to the claims can be found in the claims as originally filed. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Taniguchi (U.S. Pat. No. 6,456,730) in view of Takeda et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,777,690, herein “Takeda”); Claims 8 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Tanighchi and Takeda in view of Ishii et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,993,159, herein “Ishii”); and Claims 6 and 14 were objected to a dependent on a rejected based claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of the allowable subject matter in Claims 6 and 14. In response, Applicants have cancelled Claims 6 and 14 and incorporated the features of these allowable claims into independent Claims 1 and 17 and 9 and 21, respectively.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19, 20 and 21 as unpatentable over Tanighchi and Takeda is moot and respectfully request that the §103(a) rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19, 20 and 21, be withdrawn.

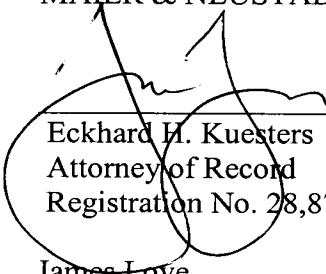
Moreover, with respect to the rejection of Claims 8 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Tanighchi, Takeda and Ishii, in light of these claim’s dependence from allowable independent Claims 1 and 9, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of

these claims is also moot and request that the rejection of Claims 8 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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